

IN THE SPECIFICATION:

Please replace paragraph [0023] beginning at page 6, line 11, with the following amended paragraph:

Alternatively, another feature of the present invention resides in that the medical aspirator includes clogging detection means for measuring a change in an amount of aspiration dropping in an aspirate sampling bottle.

Please replace paragraph [0040] beginning at page 10, line 2, with the following amended paragraph:

In the accompanying drawings:

Fig. 1 is a longitudinal sectional view showing an example of a medical aspirator in accordance with a first embodiment of the present invention and schematically illustrating a main part thereof;

Fig. 2 is an external perspective view of the medical aspirator shown in Fig. 1 in accordance with the first embodiment of the present invention;

Fig. 3 is a longitudinal sectional view showing an example of a medical aspirator in accordance with a second embodiment of the

present invention and schematically illustrating a main part thereof; [[and]]

Fig. 4 is an external perspective view of the medical aspirator shown in Fig. 3 in accordance with the second embodiment of the present invention;

Fig. 5 is a longitudinal sectional view showing an example of a medical aspirator in accordance with the present invention which combines elements of the first and second embodiments of the present invention and schematically illustrating a main part thereof; and

Fig. 6 is an external perspective view of the medical aspirator shown in Fig. 5.

Please replace paragraph [0045] beginning at page 11, line 25, with the following amended paragraph:

The medical aspirator 10 is used as described below. First, the aspirate sampling bottle 34 in an aspiration catheter set composed of the aspirate sampling bottle 34, an aspiration tube 38, an aspiration catheter (not shown), and a ~~coupling tube 36~~ coupling tube 36, is fitted in the annular bottle fixing means 24 provided in the lower front part of the aspirator and is coupled to the

aspiration port 12 via the coupling tube 36. A filter 32 for preventing an aspirate from entering the electric pump 14 and, at the same time, preventing bacteria from entering the aspiration catheter is provided between the coupling tube 36 and the aspiration port 12. Preparation of the aspiration catheter is performed, and the power supply switch 22 is pressed to start the electric pump 14.

Please replace paragraph [0047] beginning at page 12, line 20, with the following amended paragraph:

In the medical aspirator 10 of this embodiment, the atmospheric pressure obtaining release valve 20 is adapted to open simultaneously with stopping of the electric pump 14 and to close simultaneously with starting of the electric pump 14. Therefore, simultaneously with turning the power supply switch 22 off and stopping the electric pump 14, the atmospheric pressure obtaining release valve 20 opens, and pressure inside the ventilation path 16 is released to provide the atmospheric pressure. A pressure inside a pump chamber (not shown) in the electric pump 14, which communicates with the ventilation path 16, also changes to atmospheric pressure immediately.

Please replace paragraph [0049] beginning at page 13, line 12, with the following amended paragraph:

As in this embodiment, if the atmospheric pressure obtaining release valve 20 is adapted to be associated with the electric pump 14, stopping and restarting of aspiration can be performed by one manipulation of only turning the power supply switch 22 on or off, which is very convenient. However, the present invention may be carried out by separately operating the atmospheric pressure obtaining release valve 20 and the electric pump 14. In other words, an opening and closing switch of the atmospheric pressure obtaining release valve 20 is provided separately from the power supply switch 22 such that this opening and closing switch can be operated independently. When aspiration is stopped temporarily ~~for a short period of time~~, the atmospheric pressure obtaining release valve 20 is opened while the electric pump 14 is kept operating to return the pressure inside the aspiration route to a substantial atmospheric pressure and to stop the aspiration. In restarting the aspiration, the atmospheric pressure obtaining release valve 20 only has to be closed. An aspiration pressure is transmitted in a pulse-like manner by repeatedly performing this manipulation in a short period of time. This is considered to be an effective method

as a measure to cope with clogging in the aspiration catheter. However, before the atmospheric pressure obtaining release valve 20 is used, it is necessary to block the aspiration route by means for blocking the aspiration tube 38 such as a clamp, which is attached to the aspiration tube 38 side, to prevent a backward flow of the aspirate in advance.

Please replace paragraph [0083] beginning at page 27, line 12, with the following amended paragraph:

The medical aspirator in accordance with the present invention has been described in detail in conjunction with a second preferred embodiment. However, the present invention is not limited to the above-mentioned embodiment or illustration. The present invention can be carried out with the addition of various improvements, modifications, or alterations on the basis of the knowledge of those skilled in the art in a range not departing from the spirit of the present invention with respect to shape and structure of the medical aspirator, type of the electric pump and internal power supply, type and structure of the clogging detection means, clogging warning means, bottle fixing means, bottle illumination means, and the like. Thus, for example, the medical aspirator in

accordance with the present invention can be provided with both a clogging detection means as described in conjunction with the second preferred embodiment and an atmospheric pressure obtaining release valve as described in conjunction with the first preferred embodiment. Such an embodiment is shown in Figs. 5 and 6 of the application.